
Taking stock

Fifteen DCIs' First 100 Days

CIA History Staff

Editor's Note: These brief sketches convey some sense of the pace and preoccupations of 15 Directors of Central Intelligence (DCIs) in their first 100 days. No regular cycles or predictive patterns emerge; some DCIs eased into their jobs, while others found themselves suddenly reacting to wars, scandals, or investigations. Nevertheless, DCIs Smith, McCone, Schlesinger, Colby, and Gates managed major changes in CIA's structure and mission in the 100-day span.

The History Staff in CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence originally prepared this work in January 1993 as a background paper for the new DCI, R. James Woolsey. Seven of the staff's historians, Nicholas Cullather, Gerald Haines, Scott Koch, Mary McAuliffe, Kevin Ruffner, Donald Steury, and Michael Warner, drafted the individual sketches, and the staff's chief, J. Kenneth McDonald, edited them into final form. A few changes have been made in the original version for editorial and declassification reasons. Although this is an official CIA History Staff product, the views expressed--as in all of its works--are those of the authors and editor and do not necessarily represent those of the CIA.

RAdm. Sidney Souers, US Naval Reserve

The shape of the postwar world was still uncertain when Sidney Souers on 23 January 1946 became the first DCI for the newly created Central Intelligence Group (CIG). A wealthy St. Louis businessman and Naval Reservist who had impressed Navy Secretary James Forrestal, Souers had risen to Deputy Chief of Naval Intelligence during the war. Now 53, he agreed to take on one more task before returning to civilian life and his business interests in Missouri. At the White House on 24 January, President Truman read a mock proclamation and presented Souers with a black cloak and wooden dagger as the vestments and appurtenances of his new position as "director of centralized snooping."

Souers had helped draft the directive for the new CIG, which was not intended to challenge the position of the departmental intelligence services. Directed to coordinate, plan, evaluate, and disseminate intelligence, and to provide services of common concern, CIG had no clear authority to engage in clandestine collection or covert operations.

Souers ensured that CIG would survive his brief tenure and begin to fulfill its mission of coordinating the US intelligence activities. He gathered a cadre of experienced and mostly military intelligence professionals with some difficulty, because CIG was only grudgingly staffed and funded by the Departments of State, War, and Navy. By April he had also maneuvered successfully to gain responsibility for the resources of the War Department's Strategic Services Unit, the remnants of the substantial foreign intelligence capability the Office of Strategic Services had built up during the war.

At Truman's request, CIG also collated the deluge of Army, Navy, and State Department cables, dispatches, and reports that arrived daily, and produced a comprehensive intelligence summary for the White House; the first Daily Summary was delivered less than four weeks after Souers became Director. He never managed to get much cooperation from State, and the military services refused even to provide CIG with information on their own capabilities and intentions. When Souers left office on 10 June 1946, CIG's professional and clerical personnel numbered about 100.

Lt. Gen. Hoyt Vandenberg, US Army

The CIG's inherent weaknesses had become glaring by the time DCI Souers began thinking about who should replace him. In Hoyt Vandenberg, the 47-year-old nephew of powerful Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg and General Eisenhower's intelligence chief since January, Souers saw just the man to give CIG the leadership and connections it needed. President Truman's aides persuaded Eisenhower to part with his new G-2, and Vandenberg became the second DCI on 10 June 1946.

Vandenberg had learned the value of coordinated collection and analysis as commander of the 9th Air Force in the European war. An ambitious officer who hoped to head an independent Air Force, he set aside his parochial service concerns and worked hard to give CIG greater freedom from State and the military. His first months on the job saw enormous changes in CIG. Vandenberg campaigned to double its budget and vastly expand its staff. Over the objections of the State Department and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, he won for CIG monopolies on clandestine collection and foreign counterintelligence, as well as the right to conduct independent research and analysis.

For these new roles Vandenberg in July established the Office of Special Operations and the Office of Reports and Estimates, and in the same month took over intelligence operations in Latin America from the FBI. To manage this growing structure, he reorganized and strengthened the Office of the Director, subjecting it to military staff discipline under the supervision of the colonels he had brought along from Army G-2.

When President Truman asked CIG to assess the Soviet Union's increasingly worrisome behavior, Vandenberg oversaw the crash production of ORE-1, the predecessor of the CIA's National Intelligence Estimates. This first Estimate of 23 July 1946 predicted that Soviet foreign policy would continue to be "grasping and opportunistic," but also judged that Stalin still had neither the capabilities nor the desire for all-out war with the West.

By early September, when he won the right for CIG to have its own budget and to hire and fire its own personnel, Vandenberg had in principle recreated an intelligence organization with all the powers--except for covert action--of the wartime OSS. By then Vandenberg had also begun his campaign to place the CIG on a firmer legal footing, an aspiration fulfilled early in his successor's term.

RAdm. Roscoe Hillenkoetter, US Navy

Roscoe Hillenkoetter had gained an appreciation for intelligence and clandestine operations as naval attach in Vichy France in 1940-41. A 1919 Naval Academy graduate, Hillenkoetter had been wounded at Pearl Harbor and had served as Admiral Nimitz's intelligence officer in the Pacific in 1942-43. Always a sailor at heart, he had commanded the USS Missouri in late 1945, and he returned to command cruisers off Korea when he left CIA in 1950. Sworn in on 1 May 1947, he had been naval attach again in Paris when recalled to become DCI.

As a 49-year-old newly promoted rear admiral, Hillenkoetter kept a low profile in the first months of his tenure while Congress and the executive branch hammered out the National Security Act of 1947. He let his more senior predecessor, Lieutenant General Vandenberg, provide the bulk of testimony to the Congress concerning the Act's proposed reorganization of the national intelligence structure.

Hillenkoetter had plenty of foreign developments to occupy him as the Truman administration responded decisively to spreading Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, and to the threat of new Communist successes elsewhere. The Marshall Plan was announced (and denounced by Moscow and its clients), and the mood in Washington became grim as the administration imposed strict new loyalty regulations and began military and other assistance to Greece and Turkey. Hillenkoetter did not face these new Cold War challenges full force, however, until later in his tenure.

The National Security Act of 27 July 1947 created the Central Intelligence Agency along with a reorganized defense structure and a National Security Council. Truman gave Hillenkoetter a recess appointment in August 1947 as CIA succeeded CIG on 18 September, then reappointed him in November for Senate confirmation (as the new law required) in December.

Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, US Army

Intelligence failures at the beginning of the Korean war prompted President Truman to ask Lt. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith to take over as DCI. His appointment on 7 October 1950 marked the Truman administration's acceptance of the CIA as a permanent feature of the bureaucratic landscape. As Eisenhower's chief of staff, Smith had served as general manager of the European theater in World War II and enjoyed an unmatched reputation as an administrator. He had been Truman's Ambassador in Moscow and was regarded in Washington as an insider of formidable talents.

The June 1950 attack on South Korea took the administration by surprise and raised fears of a third world war. Truman wanted a tough, effective DCI to prevent future surprises and to wage clandestine war on the Soviet Union and China. The administration and Congress agreed on a massive expansion of the national security budget that led to a threefold increase in intelligence spending. Smith, who had just turned 55, entered office determined to sweep aside bureaucratic obstacles to effective intelligence gathering and covert action.

Largely following the recommendations of an early 1949 report to the NSC by a commission chaired by Allen Dulles, Smith moved quickly to streamline procedures for gathering and disseminating intelligence. Four months after the outbreak of war, the Agency had produced no coordinated estimate of the situation in Korea. Smith created a new Office of National Estimates specifically dedicated to producing national estimates under the direction of William Langer, the Harvard historian who had led the Research and Analysis branch of OSS. Langer's Board of Estimates and its staff created procedures followed for the next two decades, and Smith also stepped up efforts to obtain current economic, psychological, and photo intelligence. By 1 December he had formed a Directorate for Administration, beginning a reorganization that divided Agency operations by function into three Directorates--Administration, Plans, and Intelligence.

The CIA's expansive covert action program remained the responsibility of Frank Wisner's quasi-independent Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) formed in 1948 at the urging of George Kennan and other State Department activists. But Smith began to bring OPC under the DCI's control. In early January 1951 he made Allen Dulles the first Deputy Director for Plans (DDP), to supervise both OPC and CIA's separate espionage organization, the Office of Special Operations (OSO). It took until January 1952 to collect all intelligence functions under a Deputy Director for Intelligence (DDI). Although Frank Wisner succeeded Dulles as DDP in August 1951, it took until August 1952 to merge OSO and OPC--each of which had its own culture, methods, and pay scales--into an effective, single directorate.

Smith is remembered as one of the CIA's most effective DCIs, a leader who defined its structure and mission. He earned his reputation in his first months in office, when, with administration support and a strong sense of wartime crisis, he created a role for the new Agency.

Allen Dulles

The Eisenhower administration entered office in 1953 determined to seize the initiative in the Cold War while keeping a lid on the federal budget. The new president's choice for DCI shared his belief that covert action could offer an inexpensive alternative to military action in the many peripheral areas threatened by Communist subversion. As the head of OSS in Switzerland, Allen Dulles had directed operations that penetrated the German Foreign Office, contacted plotters against Hitler, and arranged the surrender of German forces in Italy.

After returning to law practice in 1945, he retained an intense interest in the fledgling Agency and joined Bedell

Smith in November 1950, becoming the first DDP in early 1951 and DDCI the following August. With Eisenhower's election, Allen Dulles, 59, moved into Smith's chair on 26 February 1953 as his older brother, John Foster Dulles, took over as Secretary of State. This gave the new DCI extraordinary stature in the administration, and Allen Dulles made the Agency one of Eisenhower's principal policy tools. In 1953 and 1954, the CIA used covert operations to bring to power friendly regimes in Iran and Guatemala.

In his first 100 days, Dulles cleared the way for the Agency's expanded covert action role. Eisenhower set up a special commission on international operations, which with Dulles's approval recommended a shift of resources from the type of propaganda operations that Bedell Smith had favored to more active, paramilitary operations. In August 1953 the CIA helped an Iranian Army coup overthrow premier Mohammed Mossadeq and restore the Shah.

Although Dulles enjoyed the confidence of the administration, he received less support from Congress. In mid-March 1953, Senator Joseph McCarthy summoned the new DCI to appear before the Subcommittee on Investigations to answer charges of subversion within the Agency. McCarthy's list of "subversives and other misfits" turned out to include only two Agency employees, both of whom had already been investigated and cleared. Unappeased, McCarthy raised fresh allegations every few weeks. Fearing that a prolonged investigation would damage security, Dulles appealed to Eisenhower to shelter CIA from McCarthy's hail of subpoenas. The President prevailed on the Senator to desist, and the Agency was spared the treatment that McCarthy later gave the Army.

Many regard Dulles's tenure as CIA's golden age. A protective, avuncular figure, Dulles placed his personal mark on the Agency's operations. He has been criticized, however, for advocating covert action as a simple, cheap expedient--an easy alternative for policymakers reluctant to expend lives and money for American initiatives abroad. Toward the end of his term, he had become overconfident. The hidden costs of covert operations were exposed in the Bay of Pigs debacle, and in the moral capital expended in propping up autocratic pro-American regimes in Iran and Guatemala.

John McCone

When John A. McCone became DCI on 29 November 1961, the Agency was under a cloud from the Bay of Pigs disaster the previous spring. John F. Kennedy selected McCone because he was so unlike his predecessor. In contrast to Allen Dulles, McCone, a wealthy and successful West Coast engineer and businessman, was an excellent manager. Kennedy hoped that he could use these abilities to bring the Agency under control. McCone, 59, had no background in intelligence and little interest in covert operations; this suited Kennedy, who wanted no more Bay of Pigs fiascos.

McCone immediately set to work to establish the DCI's preeminence in the Intelligence Community. To this end he pressed the White House for a Presidential letter of instruction (which he got on 16 January 1962), emphasizing the DCI's role as the President's principal foreign intelligence adviser and coordinator of the entire US intelligence effort. Although this statement gave the DCI authority to "coordinate and give guidance" to the total intelligence effort rather than to "coordinate and direct" as McCone requested, it was nevertheless the first time that any DCI had been given this authority. Throughout his tenure, McCone took a strong but uncontentious role in the Intelligence Community.

McCone also moved quickly to reorganize the Agency. Working with a small study group, McCone on 19 February 1962 created the new Directorate of Research (which a year later became the Directorate of Science and Technology). Focusing on accountability, he elevated the Comptroller's position, and later that spring moved that office as well as those of General Counsel, Legislative Counsel, and Audit Staff into the Office of the DCI. He also created the position of Executive Director. Although he originally anticipated that his DDCI (Lt. Gen. Marshall S. Carter, US Army) would take over the day-to-day administration of the Agency, McCone's own hands-on management style prevented this.

The Cold War was especially chilly when McCone entered office, and Cuba under Fidel Castro was a thorn in President Kennedy's side. As DCI-Designate McCone was present at the November 1961 founding of Operation MONGOOSE, an interagency effort to destabilize the Castro regime initiated by the President and carried out by CIA. McCone insisted on placing MONGOOSE under a National Security Council oversight group, to prevent what he termed "reckless" activity.

As DCI and former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, McCone from the outset took an active part in the committee of senior administration officials that prepared policy recommendations on arms control issues. He also took many informal steps to improve the quality of the intelligence product and to get policymakers to use that product, primarily by making it useful to their concerns.

VAdm. William Raborn, US Navy (Retired)

President Lyndon Johnson appointed retired VAdm. William Raborn as DCI on 12 April 1965. Quickly confirmed, Raborn was sworn in on 28 April 1965. The new DDCI was a CIA veteran, Richard Helms, who replaced Lieutenant General Carter. Agency officers regarded the new DCI warily. Although he had directed the Navy's Polaris missile program with extraordinary success, some thought that his technical expertise could not compensate for a lack of intelligence or foreign affairs experience. Others--including President Johnson--believed that Raborn's ability to win the confidence and support of Congress, amply demonstrated in the Polaris program, would make him an effective DCI. Fifty-nine when sworn in, Raborn was severely tested by military and political crises during the first 100 days of his 14-month term as DCI.

Raborn's tenure began with a crisis in the Dominican Republic, which led him to make lasting changes in the Operations Center. He designated an analyst to screen, evaluate, and pass significant items to him as they came in, and he began the policy of assigning senior officers to weekend duty in the Operations Center, whose facilities were also used to get important information to key policymakers quickly.

Raborn focused his attention on Vietnam almost as soon as the Dominican crisis was over. In February 1965, President Johnson had ordered the bombing of North Vietnam, and in March had landed US Marines to protect the American airbase at Danang. The CIA's involvement in the war was increasing, and Raborn moved decisively to centralize his sources of intelligence and analysis. In early July 1965, he created a Vietnam Task Force and used it to support the CIA representative--George Carver--on the National Planning Task Force for Vietnam and to make independent recommendations to President Johnson.

The Intelligence Community's control of the overhead reconnaissance program also preoccupied Raborn in his first 100 days, and one of his first acts was to determine the CIA's justification for maintaining an overhead reconnaissance capability. Attempts to coordinate Air Force and CIA overhead reconnaissance programs continued during his tenure and beyond, with no satisfactory resolution.

Richard Helms

On 18 June 1966, President Lyndon Johnson announced DCI William Raborn's resignation effective 30 June, and nominated Richard Helms, Raborn's DDCI, as the next Director. Quickly confirmed by the Senate, Helms took the oath of office on 30 June.

An OSS veteran and an intelligence professional with extensive experience managing clandestine collection, Helms at 53 was everything that Raborn was not. Helms had a high reputation in CIA and with Congress and the press. Skeptical of covert action, Helms had had no part in the Bay of Pigs debacle. Many in the Agency thought that Helms, rather than Admiral Raborn, should have succeeded John McCone in 1965.

Helms breezed through hearings before Senator Russell's Armed Service Committee, and his unanimous

confirmation helped Russell derail an effort by Senator Eugene McCarthy to add three members of the Foreign Relations Committee to the existing CIA oversight committees. As part of the Agency's effort to foster good relations with the press, Helms wrote a letter to the St. Louis Globe Democrat, praising its 18 July 1966 editorial opposing the McCarthy proposal. Unfortunately, the editorial had characterized Senator William Fulbright as "crafty" in supporting McCarthy, and Helms's letter seemed to endorse that view. The Senate reacted indignantly, and a surprised Helms immediately called not only Fulbright, but Mansfield, Stennis, and other ranking senators of both parties to apologize, and he later appeared before Fulbright's committee for further mea culpas. Within days the affair was forgotten, except by Helms, who took to heart Senator Sam Ervin's advice, "I hope that out of this matter will come an appreciation by the Director of CIA of the great truth that men rarely regret saying too little."

Vietnam was the dominating intelligence issue when Helms became DCI. President Johnson had already made the essential decisions about the progress of the war without consulting the CIA. The role of finished intelligence, as Helms saw it, was to inform and not second-guess current policy decisions. Helms recognized that the Agency had to remain an independent, unbiased source of information for the President, but he also knew that if he continually gave the President bad news, the Agency's analysis eventually would be ignored. To improve the CIA's ability to handle the increasing volume of intelligence on Vietnam, Helms in August 1966 appointed George Carver as Special Adviser for Vietnam Affairs (SAVA) and expanded his authority.

Helms inherited a DCI relationship with the President that was correct but cool. John McCone had left when President Johnson became indifferent, while Admiral Raborn had remained an outsider as DCI. Helms did not win Johnson's full confidence until late May 1967, when, on short notice, CIA produced a remarkably accurate estimate of the course and length of the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War in June. This dramatically enhanced the prestige of the Agency, and of its Director, who was thereafter invariably invited to Johnson's Tuesday lunch meetings with his closest advisers.

James Schlesinger

After his reelection in 1972, President Richard Nixon fired Richard Helms, who had led the CIA throughout his first term. Intent on reforming the Agency, he appointed James Schlesinger, 43, as DCI on 21 December 1972. Educated as an economist at Harvard, Schlesinger had also served as Director of Strategic Studies at the Rand Corporation in the late 1960s. As Assistant Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1970, Schlesinger had prepared an extensive critical study of the Intelligence Community for Nixon, which had focused on methods for improving the quality of US intelligence. At OMB, Schlesinger had gained a reputation as a budget cutter, and in 1971 President Nixon had appointed him Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Although his tenure as DCI was brief, Schlesinger took charge of the Agency on 2 February 1973 with a mandate for sweeping change. With Nixon's full support, he was determined to become the real head of the Intelligence Community and to clean house at CIA by eliminating deadwood and cutting costs. The Vietnam cease-fire on 27 January 1973 seemed to offer Schlesinger and the Nixon administration a unique opportunity to make over the CIA and the Intelligence Community, and in his five-month term Schlesinger undertook a series of dramatic changes.

To coordinate the activities of the departmental intelligence services and to maximize his role as DCI, Schlesinger almost immediately put a number of non-Agency personnel on the Intelligence Community Staff. Believing that the clandestine operator's day had passed, Schlesinger focused his early efforts on increasing technical collection and reducing the Directorate of Plans' personnel level. He fired or forced to resign or retire nearly 7 percent of the CIA's total staff, predominantly from the clandestine side of the house--whose name he also changed from Directorate of Plans to Directorate of Operations (DO).

Soon after Schlesinger's appointment, the Watergate scandal exposed the Agency to charges of involvement in

that affair and in the earlier September 1971 burglary of the Los Angeles office of Dr. Lewis Fielding, Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. The revelation of the Fielding break-in and CIA's role in it--providing a disguise, a camera, and recording equipment to G. Gordon Liddy, an ex-FBI agent and member of the Watergate plumbers--outraged Schlesinger. Having known nothing of the break-in, and determined not to be blindsided again, Schlesinger on 9 May 1973 ordered all employees to report any CIA activities they were aware of that might in any way appear inconsistent with CIA's charter. Later in May the Office of the Inspector General gave Schlesinger a 693-page list of "potential flap activities," which detailed Agency involvement in MHCHAOS, mail-opening programs, the Huston Plan, MKULTRA and drug testing, and the training of local police. Other revelations included details of CIA's attempts to assassinate foreign leaders. This is the list that became known as the "family jewels."

William Colby

In an 11 May 1973 Cabinet shakeup arising out of the Watergate affair, President Nixon announced that DCI James Schlesinger was to become Secretary of Defense and that William Colby, a professional intelligence officer, would be the next DCI. Then 53, Colby was a Princeton graduate who had served in OSS and taken a law degree from Columbia. He had joined OPC in 1950 and as a career DDP officer had served tours in Italy and Saigon. He had been Chief of Station in Vietnam in 1960 and, later, as Director, Civil Operations and Rural Development Support, he had overall responsibility for village pacification, including the controversial PHOENIX program.

Colby's swearing in as DCI was delayed until 4 September, evidently because of White House preoccupation with Watergate. During the long interim between Schlesinger's departure on 2 July and Colby's swearing in, DDCI Vernon Walters, who was serving as Acting DCI, tactfully permitted Colby as Executive Director to carry forward institutional changes that Schlesinger had set in motion.

Under Presidential pressure, Colby initiated major changes in the intelligence estimates process during his first few months as DCI. On 7 September, Colby sent Nixon an ambitious set of proposed DCI objectives to improve the intelligence product. Colby's most significant innovation was to abolish the Office and Board of National Estimates and to establish the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) system under George Carver. In his first three months as DCI, Colby also established an Office of Political Research (OPR) to provide in-depth intelligence support to top-level decisionmakers, revitalized the US Intelligence Board's Watch Committee to increase its strategic warning capabilities, created "Alert Memorandums" for key policymakers, and ordered postmortems prepared on the Intelligence Community's performance in various crises.

Overseas, Colby faced a series of unexpected crises as soon as he took office. His tenure began with a major intelligence failure, when CIA and the Intelligence Community failed to warn US policymakers before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur war in October 1973. The CIA and Intelligence Community also failed to warn of the ensuing oil crisis brought on by OPEC. Once the Egyptian-Syrian attack on Israel began, however, CIA and the Intelligence Community provided valuable support to White House crisis management.

Colby's first major problem--less than a week after he became DCI--stemmed from Congressional and press allegations that CIA was deeply involved in the military coup that had just caused the overthrow and death of Chilean President Salvador Allende. Chile left a long shadow on CIA and the investigations that came later in Colby's tenure.

George Bush

Although on 2 November 1975 President Ford asked William Colby to resign, he soon had to ask him to remain temporarily until his designated successor, George Bush, could return from his Beijing post as US envoy to the People's Republic of China. Bush did not actually succeed Colby as DCI until 30 January 1976. A former Texas Republican Congressman, Chairman of the Republican National Committee before going to China, and twice

an unsuccessful contender for appointment as Vice President to succeed first Agnew and then Ford, Bush at 51 was the first clearly partisan political figure to be appointed DCI.

The CIA had been buffeted about by investigations and revelations during the Colby period, and President Ford relied on Bush to keep the CIA out of the news and to improve employee morale. On 2 February 1976, Bush told employees that he wanted to work with the Agency's professionals to solve its problems. This step was intended to reassure CIA that he would work within the current system and make no radical changes without consulting the Agency's senior managers.

Much of Bush's work in the first months centered around the investigations that had started during Colby's tenure. The Church committee released its six-volume report on 23 April 1976, while the Village Voice had printed a leaked copy of the classified Pike committee report on 12 February 1976. Both reports' critical reviews of CIA's performance further eroded CIA morale.

On 18 February 1976, President Ford issued Executive Order No. 11905, which established policy guidelines and restrictions for individual intelligence agencies, and clarified intelligence authorities and responsibilities. The new order, a direct result of the Rockefeller Commission and Congressional investigations, was at least partly intended to forestall or preempt Congressional legislative action. Bush was given 90 days to implement the new order, which called for a major reorganization of the Intelligence Community and firmly stated that intelligence activities could not be directed against US citizens.

Recognizing that Congressional support was crucial for CIA, Bush worked closely with Congress as both the Senate and House moved to establish permanent intelligence oversight committees. He quietly installed new leadership in CIA's Directorates, implemented the new Executive Order, and began to overhaul intelligence production to give it more depth and expertise. In April he selected a CIA career professional, E. Henry Knoche, to become DDCI when General Vernon Walters retired in July.

In spite of his brief tenure--a few days short of a year--Bush is remembered as one of CIA's most popular DCIs. Taking care not to politicize the DCI's position, Bush improved employee morale, strengthened CIA's standing after a wrenching period of scandals, and successfully began CIA's post-investigation reforms.

Adm. Stansfield Turner, US Navy (Retired)

When newly elected President Carter called him to the White House in early February 1977, Adm. Stansfield Turner, then commander of NATO's Southern Flank in Naples, thought he might be offered appointment as DCI. At this suggestion his deputy observed, "Stan, the President is your classmate and friend; he wouldn't do that to you." He did, and Turner accepted, although he regretted the end of his military career. Turner, 53, was sworn in as 12th DCI on 9 March 1977. President Carter had rejected George Bush's offer to remain DCI for a few months to demonstrate that it was not a political or policy position that had to change with a new administration; Bush left CIA on 20 January. In the face of stiff Congressional opposition, however, Carter's original nominee, Theodore C. Sorenson, had with some bitterness withdrawn his name. After this setback, it was natural for Carter to look for a nonpolitical senior military officer who could be quickly confirmed for the post.

In retrospect, Turner recalls that his attitude toward CIA was strongly influenced by the experience of his first 100 days. In that period he permitted the courts to examine CIA evidence which led to the convictions of Christopher J. Boyce and Andrew Daulton Lee in the spring of 1977. This case convinced him that CIA had severe security problems in managing its contractors. Similarly, his discovery (on information from Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward) that former CIA officer Edmund Wilson, who worked for Libyan President Qaddafi, had contacts inside CIA raised doubts about the DO's probity and security (although Turner trusted his DDO, Bill Wells). By summer CIA had unearthed and turned over to Congress more information about CIA's massive drug testing programs of the 1950s and 1960s, which again put CIA into the headlines.

Turner's most disturbing discovery was the harsh questioning and illegal imprisonment that the Agency's Counterintelligence Staff had imposed for several years on Soviet defector Yuri Nosenko. This convinced him that CIA could be a dangerous organization if not kept closely accountable to the DCI, the President, and the Congress.

Turner soon found that he did not have a close working relationship with DDCI Knoche, whom Bush had appointed the previous year. By summer, when he asked Knoche to leave, Turner had become convinced that the Agency's culture was an obstacle to the reforms that CIA needed.

William Casey

At 67 the oldest incumbent of the office, DCI William Casey arrived at CIA with intelligence experience that dated from a distinguished OSS record in World War II to PFIAB service under President Ford. A man of powerful intellect and great energy, Casey was an unreconstructed Cold Warrior with a penchant for action and a fascination with covert operations. He had made a lot of money in tax publications and as an entrepreneur, and had served under Nixon and Ford--often amid considerable controversy--as Chairman of the SEC, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, and President of the Export-Import Bank. His principal claim to his new appointment, however, was his extraordinarily effective service as manager of Ronald Reagan's victorious 1980 campaign.

Reagan loyalists and conservatives who dominated the new administration's CIA transition team produced a report that roundly condemned both the Agency's methods and record. In its most extreme form, this report warned the future DCI against attempts to co-opt him, called for CIA's division into several new bodies, and proposed to fire everyone in CIA above the grade of GS-14 as complicit with the failed Carter-Turner policies. Although Casey may have had some sympathy with the report's rhetoric, he entirely rejected its recommendations. Casey believed in centralized intelligence and expected to preside over an intact CIA. Moreover, he recognized that in an Agency still reeling from the crises of the 1970s, the transition team's drastic measures would only destroy what morale remained. He thus persuaded Reagan to give him a free hand to revitalize both the operational and analytical sides of the agency.

In fact, Casey was highly critical of past Agency performance, whose vision of the Soviet Union in particular he felt had been far too benign. Convinced that the sources of Soviet behavior were both revolutionary and deeply rooted in the Russian psyche, Casey was determined to incorporate these factors into Agency reporting. His goal was to make Agency analysis more "policy relevant." In the long run Casey's reforms probably did significantly improve the intelligence product; he was less likely to attempt to influence the substance of analysis than to focus on what one DI manager called "tone and balance." Although this worried many analysts, their concern was tempered with the realization that the new DCI brought with him enhanced influence and prestige for the Agency.

Except for difficult and contentious confirmation hearings, none of the political crises that were to haunt Casey as DCI surfaced during the first 100 days. Yet if this period was uneventful, it did little to reassure Congress. Uncomfortable in his dealings on the Hill, Casey performed unevenly in front of Congressional committees and tended to rely on Presidential support. Three months into his tenure, however, William Casey's most memorable decisions as DCI still lay ahead.

William Webster

When William Webster took office as 14th DCI on 26 May 1987, it was evident that his predecessor's efforts to revitalize the CIA had succeeded. Webster inherited an Agency with greatly expanded covert operational capabilities and an analytical apparatus of notably enhanced prestige and credibility. It was also in trouble, beset by charges of illegal activity arising out of the Iran-Contra scandal. Moreover, Webster's DDCI, Robert

Gates, whom the inexperienced DCI required for analytical support and expertise, was himself suspected of being at least implicitly involved in the Iran-Contra affair.

Webster's brief was to bring the CIA's credibility with Congress and the public to the same high level it now enjoyed in the national security community. A former Federal judge, Webster had successfully played a similar role as Director of the FBI, and his appointment promised a lower profile for the DCI in the future. His task was made easier by the Tower Commission Report which, while not uncritical of the CIA, made it clear that the Iran-Contra affair was a National Security Council initiative and that the Agency as an institution--as opposed to the actions of specific individuals--was not involved.

In his first 100 days, Webster worked hard to emphasize CIA's accountability before the public and the Congress. Where Casey had looked for a free hand in his management of the Agency, Webster pursued a policy that clearly recognized the CIA's subordination to national policy. Apart from strengthening ties to Congress, Webster tightened up the internal review process, defining rigorous standards by which covert action would be judged for competence, practicality, and consistency with American foreign policy and values.

Webster's tenure began in a period of great uncertainty in establishing overall intelligence objectives. By 1987 it was clear that the decline of the Soviet Union as a world power was irreversible, and its continuation as a single entity was beginning to come into question. The twin problems of terrorism and international drug enforcement already posed problems that transcended the normal lines of Intelligence Community organization. Moreover, in Webster's first 100 days the Iran-Iraq war demanded an intelligence collection and evaluation effort that drew expertise from virtually every office in the Directorates of Intelligence and Operations.

These three sets of intelligence problems--the USSR, terrorism and counternarcotics, and the Iran-Iraq war--provided models for the interdisciplinary task forces or centers that were to proliferate under Webster and, later, Gates. At the same time, the advent of a new era of arms control raised questions of treaty verification that had not been dealt with seriously for nearly a decade.

Webster's first 100 days set the tenor of the remainder of his term as DCI. Navigating cautiously in a complex world dominated by long-service professionals, his style of management was detached and his role in government a conciliatory one.

Robert Gates

Robert Gates, the first DCI from CIA's Directorate of Intelligence, entered office on 6 November 1991 at age 48 with the future of the Agency and his own professional integrity in question. Both factors helped account for the intensity with which he approached his first 100 days as DCI.

The failed coup of August 1991 had led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the breakup of the Soviet empire, and the end of the Cold War. With the sudden demise of the CIA's chief target, the Agency unexpectedly found itself searching for a new role. This urgent situation was exacerbated by the rocky state of the US economy, which produced growing demands to reduce the burden of military and intelligence establishments.

Following Casey's resignation in 1987, President Reagan had nominated Gates as DCI, but questions about his role as Casey's DDCI in the Iran-Contra affair forced Gates to withdraw his nomination. Four years later, President Bush again nominated Gates, to succeed William Webster. This time, Gates faced charges that he had politicized intelligence estimates to conform more closely to his own world views and to those of the Republican President he had served. After committing himself to unbiased and objective intelligence analysis, and to a more forward-looking and open CIA, Gates received the Senate's confirmation. Now, he had to live up to his promises.

Gates recognized the diverse new problems that the Intelligence Community had to address, from foreign

technology development and high-technology transfers to world environmental concerns. Keenly aware that US security objectives had changed dramatically, he knew that the CIA needed to prove itself to an American public that now questioned both its necessity and its highly secretive culture. Thus, in his first 100 days as DCI, he quickly assessed future intelligence priorities and needs, identified available resources, and recommended organizational changes as well as new budget and legislative proposals.

To improve performance he established a multitude of Intelligence Community and CIA task forces. These included interagency task forces on imagery, human intelligence collection, and National Intelligence Estimates, as well as on coordination of various activities within the Intelligence Community and the restructuring of its staff. Gates set up CIA task forces to expand human intelligence capabilities, improve support for military operations, provide near-real-time intelligence to senior policymakers, and raise the quality of intelligence publications. He also announced CIA task forces to improve internal communication, increase openness, and address concerns about real or perceived politicized intelligence.

By February 1992, Gates had already made many restructuring changes aimed at carrying out his task forces' recommendations, as in replacing the Office of Soviet Analysis with a new Office of Slavic and Eurasian Analysis. With an eye toward better relations with Congress and the American people, he announced a precedent-breaking openness policy for CIA, which provided more accessibility to the media and public, increased contacts with academia, and a markedly more liberal declassification standard for CIA records of historical significance.
